

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD
REGULAR MEETING
November 12, 2013**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Jacqueline Isaacson called the regular meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals to order at 7:32 P. M. in Conference Room #5 at Bloomfield Town Hall. The following members were also present: Tara Baldwin, Suzanne Caron, Stephen Millette, Toby Neuwirth, Fannie Pittman, and Lucille Wactowski. Sheldon Neal was absent. Also present were Michael Kosilla, Zoning Compliance Officer; Lisa Gray, Commission Clerk; and other interested parties.

II. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A motion was made by Ms. Pittman to nominate Jacqueline Isaacson to serve as 2014 Chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals. Ms. Wactowski seconded the motion, and it unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Ms. Pittman to close the nominations for 2014 Chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals. Ms. Wactowski seconded the motion, and it unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Chairperson Isaacson to nominate Fannie Pittman to serve as 2014 Secretary to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Ms. Caron seconded the motion, and it unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Ms. Pittman to close the nominations for 2014 Secretary to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Ms. Wactowski seconded the motion, and it unanimously carried.

III. NOTICE OF MEETING

Ms. Wactowski read the Meeting Notice.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Request by Robert Mocarsky for a Use Variance to allow a child day care program at 1170 Blue Hills Avenue, R-15 Zone.

Robert Mocarsky explained that Rehoboth Church of God is requesting a Use Variance to operate an infant care center for families, in its existing facilities that are currently used for infant care only during Sunday services. The center would operate Monday through Friday, from 7:00 A. M. to 5:00 P. M., and care for up to eight infants aged 6 weeks to 12 months.

Ms. Caron asked Mr. Mocarsky to clarify the hardship. Mr. Mocarsky replied that the town regulations have changed since the church was built in that places of worship are no longer permitted in Residential Zones. Also, during the special use permitting process before the Town Plan and Zoning Commission it was stated that the Church would not be used as an open enrollment day care facility so that function within the Church was not grandfathered.

Ms. Favy Ellis-Gordon who will be in charge of the infant care center answered some questions about the operations of the facility. Pastor Jonathan Ramsey stated that, not only will the infant care center serve the needs of the congregation, but it will also bring much-needed revenue to the church.

Seeing that there were no other questions, Chairperson Isaacson closed the public hearing.

A motion was made by Ms. Caron to approve a use variance to allow an infant care center at 1170 Blue Hills Avenue, based on the hardship being the change in town regulations since the church was built. Ms. Pittman seconded the motion, and it unanimously carried.

B. Request by Matthew Baird for a Rear Yard Variance to allow a solar array at 1414 Blue Hills Avenue, I-2 Zone.

Steve Westerberg, of BNB Renewable Energy Holdings, explained that his company is seeking a five-foot rear yard variance to install a solar array at the existing Pepperidge Farm facility. He stated that

BNB has been hired to design and construct 16 projects around the country for Campbell Soup. The energy generated from the proposed array is the same as taking 200 cars per year off of the road. Mr. Westerberg stated that the existing topography and structures and features on the property limit the placement of the solar array and the proposed placement is their only option.

Harry Pettit, of Pepperidge Farm, stated that the facility has already installed a fuel cell system and the proposed solar array is critical to their sustainability efforts, as Pepperidge Farm will be able to dramatically reduce its fossil fuel use and overall carbon footprint at this facility by generating 70% of their power needs.

Mr. Millette asked why aren't the solar panels being placed on the existing building rooftops? Mr. Westerberg replied that the existing buildings are not designed to support them, and because the building is used as a bakery the rooftops have numerous HVAC units and equipment on them.

Ms. Caron asked whether the energy being generated would be sold? Mr. Brandon Wall of BNB stated that CL&P buys the credits and Pepperidge Farm gets the energy. He further stated that on slow manufacturing days the energy would probably be going back into the energy grid. The height of the panels will be about 8 feet and they will be fixed panels.

Ms. Neuwirth asked about the upkeep and was told that there is some maintenance that must be done like replacing cracked panels, wiping the panels glass surface, and keeping vegetation around the panels down. Ms. Neuwirth asked about the wetlands/streams on the property and was told that the placement of the solar array would have no impact on them.

Ms. Neuwirth asked about placing some on the roof, some in the front yard, and some in the rear. Mr. Westerberg stated that because of all the wiring involved it would not be feasible to have different groups of panels around the property.

Mr. Kosilla stated that there are two other rooftop solar projects in Town that have just been completed. One is on the Home Goods warehouse, which is just across the street from Pepperidge, and the other is on the Salamander Building at the corner of Britton Dr. and Blue Hills Ave. The Town Plan and Zoning Commission is going to review, and discuss, regulations for solar arrays next week at their meeting. The recommended property line setback in those regulations are 5 feet.

Ms. Wactowski asked about upfront costs for a project such as this and about this becoming a solar graveyard if it doesn't work. Mr. Westerberg explained that banks look at Campbell Soups 100+ year history and they have been determined to be financially sound. When it comes to projects such as this the profit margins are very thin. The banks pick those companies that are the most financially sound.

Seeing that there were no other questions Chairperson Isaacson closed the public hearing.

A motion was made by Ms. Wactowski to approve a five-foot rear yard variance at 1414 Blue Hills Avenue, based on the property owner's inability to make full use of the property due to regulation restrictions. Ms. Caron seconded the motion, and it unanimously carried.

V. APPROVAL OF 2014 MEETING SCHEDULE

A motion was made by Ms. Pittman to approve the 2014 meeting schedule, as presented. Ms. Wactowski seconded the motion, and it unanimously carried.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2013

A motion was made by Ms. Pittman to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2013 meeting, as presented. Ms. Baldwin seconded the motion, and it unanimously carried.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Ms. Pittman to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 P. M.

